



Canines secure aircraft safety

By Staff Sgt. Chris Jordan
Public Affairs

Hurlburt Field has added two new members to its team in the name of safety. Rebecca Rushing, a Birdstrike Program manager assigned here, and her Border collie Rhett, have been contracted to provide an effective and safe means for ridding Hurlburt Field's flightline and surrounding area of birds and wildlife.

With more than 4,000 bird strikes reported each year by both civilian and military aircraft, causing about \$250 million in damages, the importance for airport facilities to safely and effectively control birds and wildlife has grown into a top priority.

To help eliminate the costly damages, Border collies from the Border Collie Rescue, a national humane organization that assists in the rescue and placement of the dogs, have been used as a means to rid airfields of hazardous wildlife. Hurlburt Field alone has averaged 92 bird strikes in the last four years costing an average of \$340,000 per year. These costs don't factor in any additional workload, lost use of an aircraft or lost training time, said Maj. Charles Mangold, 16th Special Operations Wing safety officer. Along with birds, deer



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Jordan

Rhett (above), a Border collie assigned to the Hurlburt Field safety team, prepares to chase away birds and other wildlife responsible for bird strikes, associated with costly aircraft damages and safety hazards.

also present a runway and takeoff hazard to aircraft.

"In March 2004, we had an AC-130U Gunship hit a deer on takeoff which caused over \$14,000 in damage to the aircraft," Major Mangold said. "In his second week of working the airfield, Rhett has already chased another deer off the runway at the exact spot of the earlier strike. Deer and other animals will soon learn that the grass of the infield is no longer a safe place to come to eat."

The dogs are specially trained for the needs of the specific airport that plans to use them, said Dr. Nicholas

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Wingman Day 'Airmen taking care of Airmen'

By Senior Airman Heidi Davis
Public Affairs

After a request by Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. John Jumper, all major commands halted operations Nov. 22 to focus on the rising stress levels of Airmen.

The purpose of the event, dubbed Wingman Day, was to examine how to collectively enhance culture at every level -

beginning with General Jumper and the MAJCOMs and working down to the troops in each squadron - by initializing an attitude of "Airmen taking care of Airmen."

Before addressing the mental well-being of the troops, Hurlburt Field leadership gathered for an early morning exercise session to enhance their physical health.

Col. O.G. Mannon, 16th Special Operations Wing commander, and

all squadron commanders and first sergeants conducted the session of physical training at the Aderholt Fitness Center.

Immediately following, they proceeded to the Joint Special Operations University for a group session, where they were briefed on the purpose of Wingman Day, background information on stress, sui-

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720th OSS takes pressure off group

By Master Sgt. L.B. St. Amant
720th Special Tactics Group

A new era in the 720th Special Tactics Group began Monday with the activation of the 720th Operations Support Squadron.

Commanded by Lt. Col. David Horwitz, the newly-activated squadron will be responsible for maintaining oversight and execution of group policies concerning manning, equipping and training all combat control, pararescue, combat weather and support personnel assigned to Special Tactics units.

"The 720th OSS will take some pressure off the 720th SIG so it can focus on the bigger career field and battle-field Airman issues," said Colonel Horwitz. "Our job at the 720th OSS is taking care of the troops, and taking care of the day-to-day taskings and training issues of the men and women of Special Tactics."

Although historic within the group, this change will pull the 720th SIG more in line with a typical Air Force group arrangement, Colonel Horwitz said. Those who are assigned to the functions moving from the group to the 720th OSS will make the move with their units.

Additionally, the Advanced Skills Training flight previously assigned to the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron transferred with all personnel and equipment to the newly formed squadron. Along with the AST flight's permanently assigned personnel, the squadron will also be responsible for

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Safety briefings

A holiday safety briefing will be held at the base theater Dec. 13, 14 and 16 at 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and Dec. 17 at 7 a.m., 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. All 16th Special Operations Wing assigned military personnel must attend one of the briefings. All 16th SOW assigned Department of Defense civilians are highly encouraged to attend.

COMMANDO's last issue

The COMMANDO newspaper will produce its last issue for 2004, Dec. 17. All classified ads and Hurlburt Happening briefs need to be submitted no later than Dec. 10 in order to appear in the Dec. 17 issue. The next COMMANDO issue will be published Jan. 7. For more information, call the public affairs office at 884-7464 or e-mail commando@hurlburt.af.mil.

K-9's show off for tots



The Moms, Pops and Tots class visits the 16th Security Forces Squadron for a K-9 dog demonstration

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Weather forecast

Friday - Partly cloudy,
High 65 Low 41

Saturday - Partly cloudy,
High 66 Low 43

Sunday - Showers,
High 68 Low 46

www.hurlburt.af.mil/milonly/weather/5day

Open Line

The Commander's Open Line is your direct line to me for questions or suggestions about subjects of concern to the Hurlburt Field community. I really appreciate your feedback.

To receive a response, leave your name, unit and telephone number. Open lines of general interest will be printed in the

COMMANDO. I'll answer the others by letter or phone call. Remember, the quickest and most efficient way to resolve a problem is to talk directly to the agency responsible. This gives them an opportunity to help you and perhaps improve their process.

However, if you're not satisfied with the answer you receive, feel free to give me a call at 884-OPEN (6736), or e-mail your concerns to commando@hurlburt.af.mil.



Col. O.G. Mannon

Thanks given for hurricane clean up

Comment: Thank you for the support we received from Team Hurlburt Oct. 16 with the cleanup of our townhome complex.

As with most properties on Santa Rosa Island, the aftermath from Hurricane Ivan was overwhelming. However, when the call for help went out to the men and women of Hurlburt Field, our problem was solved.

We contacted the Chief's Group and the Top 3 to request 20-25 volunteers to help us move storm debris. What we got was 35-40 Air Commandos that selflessly gave up their Saturday morning to help us.

What would have taken the residents more than a month of Saturdays to complete was done by noon.

Words can't express how grateful we are for this assistance. These individuals are truly "Ambassadors in Blue" and certainly live up to the Air Commando motto, "Any Time, Any Place."

Gratitude for picnic table assembly

Comment: Please extend our heartfelt thanks to the Hurlburt Field Airman Leadership School Class 04-G for volunteering their time to assemble new picnic tables for the students at Destin Elementary School.

The 26-person group included a spouse and child of the class. All together, 30 picnic tables were assembled and placed around Destin Elementary's campus, while the old picnic tables, which were destroyed by Hurricane Ivan, were carried away.

Stressed Airmen: Who's your wingman?

By Gen. John Jumper
Air Force Chief of Staff

Stress is nothing new to military life, and there are many factors that contribute to this. But lately, stress has been taking its toll on our Airmen.

Our suicide rate is skyrocketing, while accidental deaths are more than 36 percent above what they were four years ago.

We lost 57 people to suicide in the past year – a dramatic, and tragic, increase from last year. We lost another 99 Airmen to accidents. Combined, that's an order of magnitude greater than our combat losses in Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001. We're causing ourselves more harm than the enemy. We must do a better job of looking after one another – be better wingmen.

Our jobs are inherently stressful. This is a fact of our profession. We have more than 30,000 Airmen deployed across the globe, with more than 7,000 of them in a combat environment. Many Airmen are now on their sixth deployment in ten years. Those at home face increased work hours, inconsistent manning and a continuous workload. More stress comes from uncertainty.

In addition, increased Air and Space Expeditionary Force deployment periods, force restructuring, NCO retraining, and the Secretary of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure assessments and potential base closures may suggest an ambiguous or unstable future to some Airmen.

This can often lead to other stress factors, like family or relationship problems, financial or legal problems and substance abuse. We're taking steps to mitigate some of these factors, but stress will always be a concern, but a problem we can manage.

The Air Force leadership is confronting this problem. We can't relieve the tempo of deployment. When our nation calls, we must respond. However, we can and

will work to provide our Airmen with the support they need to carry their load. We are reinvigorating our suicide prevention program that had dramatically dropped the number of suicides over the past seven years. The program worked, but it needs a shot in the arm.

Along with suicide prevention, we're continuing to focus on safety and risk management, with zero mishaps as our goal. However, this problem can't be solved through programs and training sessions alone. It's going to take an effort from the whole force, from our commanders and supervisors to every Airman in the force. It will take your total commitment.

Commanders: You bear the responsibility for the total welfare of our greatest asset – Airmen. You're responsible for their physical, emotional, social and spiritual well being. Use your base resources. You should know when your Airmen need help and where to send them to get it.

Supervisors: You're our first line of defense. Like commanders, you're responsible for the well being of the people you supervise. It's you who look every Airman in the eye every day. It's you who can spot the first signs of trouble, and you who are in the best position to listen and engage.

Airmen: Be good wingmen. Take care of yourself and those around you. Step in when your wingman needs help. Signs of stress and suicide shouldn't be dismissed, nor should senseless risks to life and limb because of improper safety and irresponsible behavior.

In today's expeditionary Air Force, commanders and supervisors are often deployed. We rely on those who remain behind as acting commanders and supervisors to be familiar with the stresses confronting their Airmen and to be familiar with all the tools necessary to deal with these stresses. Take care of your wingmen on the ground, so we can continue to confront America's enemies from air and space.

This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. It's published by the Northwest Florida Daily News, a private firm that isn't connected with the U.S. Air Force, under an exclusive written contract with the 16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

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Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

COMMANDO Classified ad policy

Free classified advertisements are available to Department of Defense military members, DOD civilians, retirees and their family members only. Advertisements are for the one-time sale of personal property only and will run only once per submission. Advertisements for businesses or income producing activities may not be printed. All advertisements must be manually typed into the advertising database computer located in the public affairs office in Building 90210, Suite 326. Mailed, faxed, e-mailed, phoned-in ads, etc. won't be accepted. All ads will run on a space available basis only. Submission of an advertisement doesn't guarantee its appearance in the Commando. The Commando staff reserves the right to edit or refuse classified advertisements due to inappropriate content, space considerations or other reasons deemed necessary. Paid advertisements may be submitted to the Daily News at 863-1111. This is the only way to guarantee an advertisement will run in the Commando.

Production

Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the 16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs Office. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photography unless otherwise indicated. The COMMANDO staff may include or exclude articles based upon the news value determined by the staff, impact on the wing's mission, and the space allotted for editorial content by the publisher.

Submitting articles

The deadline for submissions to the COMMANDO is 4 p.m. Wednesday for briefs the week prior to publication. Articles may be submitted on IBM format computer disk or via electronic mail. Non-electronic submissions must be typed, double-spaced. Submissions must include the name and telephone number of a person to call for questions.

Address information

U.S. MAIL: COMMANDO
131 Bartley Street, Suite 326
Hurlburt Field, FL 32544-5271
E-MAIL: commando@hurlburt.af.mil
TELEPHONE: (850) 884-7464 FAX: (850) 884-6093

COMMANDO Editorial Staff:
Col. O.G. Mannon
Commander
Capt. Thomas Knowles
Chief, public affairs
2nd Lt. Amy Gonzales
Deputy chief, public affairs
Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson
NCOIC
Staff Sgt. Chris Jordan
Chief, Internal Information/Staff writer
Senior Airman Heidi Davis
Editor
Airman James Dickens
Senior Staff Writer
Vanessa Adame
Layout and Design/Staff writer
16th Communications Squadron
Photography
Northwest Florida Daily News
Production Support

DUI Tracker

Nov. 25-Dec. 2: 1 DUI
This year: 41
DUIs for 2003: 54
Last DUI: 16th Operations Support Squadron, Nov. 25
Don't Drink and Drive. Call AADD at 884-8844
Potential lives saved this year: 1050
Days since last DUI:
16th OG...**7** 16th MSG..**15**
16th MXG..**31** 16th MDG..**260**
As of Feb. 15, 16th SOW groups receive a down day if any Hurlburt Field assigned units earn 60 consecutive days without a DUI. Totals are current as of Dec. 2.



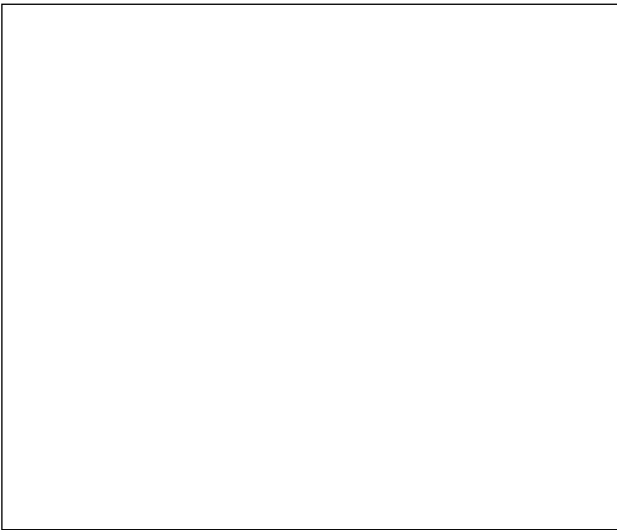


Photo by Staff Sgt. Ebony Pierre

Tight embrace

Maj. Gen. John Folkerts, Air Force Special Operations Command vice commander, hugs his sons after they helped attach new rank to his uniform.

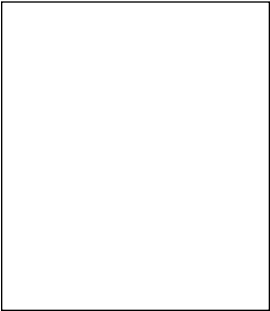
General Folkerts was promoted to major general in a ceremony this week presided by Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley, AFSOC commander. General Folkerts thanked those in attendance, which included AFSOC Airmen, community leaders, colleagues, mentors, his wife Catherine and mother Betty.

“As a commander, nothing is more important than the Air Force family, which includes all of our active-duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen, spouses and children,” said General Folkerts.

General Folkerts is responsible for organizing, training, equipping, educating and maintaining the command’s forces for worldwide deployment and assignment to regional unified commands.

The command has approximately 19,000 active-duty, Reserve, Air National Guard and civilian personnel, more than 100 fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, and three active flying units.

Spotlight on...



Kelly Burgess

Duty Title: Unit Training Manager
Organization: 16th Security Forces Squadron
Hometown: Gloversville, N.Y.

Hobbies: Crafts, camping
Contribution to the mission: As the sole manager for the upgrade training program at the 16th SFS, Sergeant Burgess is responsible for approximately 220 security forces personnel.

She singlehandedly tracks correspondence course progress and schedules end of course exams.

Sergeant Burgess also works directly with the flight chiefs and supervisors to ensure the most complete training and testing for the squadron’s new troops.

Additionally, Sergeant Burgess works directly with the major command to allocate and schedule MAJCOM and squadron-funded temporary duty leave and training.

(Editor’s Note: The Commando highlights Airmen, junior NCOs, company grade officers, Department of Defense civilians and volunteers in units who do a great job, and should receive day-to-day recognition. Supervisors can call the 16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs Office at 884-7464 for more information on nominating an individual for the “Spotlight on...” column.)

Base spouses clubs merge as one organization

By Vanessa Adame
Public Affairs

In a move of solidarity, the Hurlburt Officers’ Spouses Club recently voted to change its name to the Hurlburt Field Spouses Club to reflect the new members the club hopes to bring in.

The once exclusive organization is extending its membership to spouses other than those married to Hurlburt Field officers. Aside from attracting enlisted members’ spouses, the HFSC is also extending membership to GS-level employees’ spouses who are employed here on base. And although women make up most of the organization, male spouses are also encouraged to join.

According to Barbara Mannon, spouse of Col. O.G. Mannon, 16th Special Operations Wing commander,

the move was spawned by low participation rates from both the Hurlburt Enlisted Spouses Club and HOSC. The HESC has since been disbanded. However, the move to integrate all spouses aims to fill the void the HESC has left behind, and also improve community involvement overall.

“We’re very excited about this,” said Mrs. Mannon. “We want to offer every spouse an opportunity to be a part of the organization and work for our base community and surrounding community.”

Members of the HOSC are also looking forward to the new alliance.

“I don’t think we need to exclude anyone from joining a club just because of what our spouses do,” said April Golden, HOSC secretary. “We’re all here supporting our spouses and taking care of our family and we

should be united since we’re all here on equal terms. I really hope that spouses see this is as an opportunity and be each other’s support groups instead of being separated.”

Elaina Cron, a former member of the HESC, agrees. “I think it’s a great move,” she said. “It helps to have an outlet for all spouses.”

The spouses club stays active in the community raising money for scholarships, charities and non-profit organizations. The club also operates the base thrift shop.

The HOSC conducts executive board meetings the first Thursday of each month and holds functions every third Thursday of each month. Membership fees consist of \$5 monthly dues. For more information about the organization, call April Golden at 581-3501.

The visit began with a 16th Special Operations Wing mission briefing, followed by tours of the 373rd Training Squadron 2nd, Detachment 7’s armament system maintenance trainer where weapons instructors gave them a close look at an AC-130U Spooky Gunship mock-up, educating them on the capabilities of the gun systems employed on the Gunship.

The civic leaders also received a demonstration on life support equipment provided to aircrews, giving the visitors a greater appreciation of the preparations necessary to protect our Air Commandos in the event of an aircraft emergency. The leaders also toured the Air Park where they heard the rich and seasoned history of the Air Commandos and the aircraft they flew. As part of their tour, the group also visited Eglin Air Force Base and Duke Field during their whirlwind, two-day trip. “This trip has shown me the Air Force doesn’t just fly airplanes,” said Robert Freer, consulting engineer.

Pennsylvania civic leaders leave with good impression

By Amy Oliver
Public Affairs

With the assistance of the 913th Airlift Wing, 25 civic leaders from the Willow Grove Air Reserve Station area in Pennsylvania toured Hurlburt Field Nov. 19.

Col. Steven Chapman, commander of 913th Air Wing, headed up the civic leader tour that was intended to broaden American citizens’ awareness and understanding of the Air Force’s role in national security. Attendees were chosen based on the various publics they represent, so they can effectively disseminate information to a large number of people.

Week in History

The following are extraordinary events in military history that occurred this week:

- Nov. 29, 1951 – The development of the U.S. Air Force’s first all-jet heavy bomber, XB-52, was announced
- Nov. 30, 1956 – The TM-61 Matador became

- the Air Force’s first completely tactical missile
- Dec. 1, 1941 – The Civil Air Patrol was created
- Dec. 2, 1935 – A mass flight of 20 bombers completed a flight from California to Florida in 21 hours, 50 minutes
- Dec. 3, 1945 – The P-80 became the U.S. Army Air Force’s first jet fighter

Duke Field makes advances on fuels complex

By Senior Airman Erick Hofmeyer
919th SOW Public Affairs

DUKE FIELD, Fla. – The sounds of heavy equipment can be heard at



Photo by Senior Airman Erik Hofmeyer

Master Sgt. Keith Free, 919th Special Operations Wing facilities manager and Stephen Thompson, Whitesell-Green project superintendent, inspect a detection well at the new fuels storage complex.

First Lady aircraft gets needed care

By Sandra Henry
919th SOW Public Affairs

DUKE FIELD, Fla. – Retirement isn't for everyone. After nine years of basking in the Florida sun, the lady looked years older than her tender age of 51. Markings unidentifiable and paint peeling, she looked more like 129, the number she wore.

The project to restore the "First Lady," tail number 53-0129, began as a Duke Field Human Resource Development Council initiative in 2002 and is moving forward.

The aircraft, the first production model C-130 to enter the Air Force inventory, was modified as an AC-130A Gunship and flown and maintained for 20 years by 919th Special Operations Wing members. Upon retirement, she was moved to the Eglin Air Force Armament Museum and lacked the attention she was accustomed to from the people who cared so much about her.

In November 2002, wing volunteers prepped and primed her for a top coat, said Jay Pavlas, 919th Mission Support Group environmental manager. But because of bad weather, deployments and changes in museum manpower policies, she didn't get painted until about four months ago when volunteers from Eglin AFB's 33rd Maintenance Group

the southern end of the Duke Field flightline, as contractors proceed with construction of a petroleum, oil, lubricant complex.

The complex, scheduled for completion by November 2005, will replace the existing 40-year-old fuel storage complex that supplies jet fuel needed for flight training and aircraft operations for 919th Special Operations Wing Reservists.

Replacement of the current system is required to maintain an adequate and safe supply of jet fuel storage, and increase pumping and dispensing capabilities to support the assigned Special Operations mission, said Master Sgt. Keith Free, 919th SOW facilities manager here.

For safety reasons, it will be nice having the jet fuel storage tanks removed from the middle of the base, said Sergeant Free. In addition, the site is easily accessible for fuel deliveries both to the complex

responded to a request from George Jones, aerospace specialist at the museum.

With only the nose art and stencils remaining for restoration of the exterior, Mr. Pavlas contacted Tech. Sgt. Ed Duran, artist and 919th Maintenance Squadron crew chief, for help.

Sergeant Duran agreed to paint the aircraft's Spectre emblem and began the job about 9 p.m. Oct. 27. The light he was using was so bright he decided to work by moonlight, he said. A lunar eclipse caught him by surprise.

"It was eerie painting the Spectre during the eclipse. The moon turned blood red while I was working. I had to stop. It crept me out," he said.

Nine hours of work and a few days later, Sergeant Duran completed the emblem.

When stencils are applied, exterior restoration will be complete, said Mr. Pavlas. He and Master Sgt. Sean Alford, 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron, have already cut out the stencils and plan to apply them as soon as lift equipment is available.

Even without the stencils, the First Lady is a sight to see. "I'm passionate about her and love to show her off," said Mr. Jones. "When I started work at the museum a year ago, it broke my heart to see her condition. But, she's my favorite aircraft out here, and she's a beauty now."

The museum staff seeks individuals or organizations to adopt this and other aircraft at the museum. For more information, call 882-4972.

and to aircraft on the flightline. This minimizes traffic and safety hazards posed during fuel transport, loading and dispensing.

The new POL complex allows for the continued use of the existing POL complex during construction, ensuring the availability of Duke Field to perform peacetime and wartime missions, he said.

The complex will have two steel 2,500-barrel aboveground holding tanks that can hold up to 210,000 gallons of fuel.

In comparison, the current complex has an 110,000-gallon fuel capacity, said Sergeant Free. Concrete dikes will be constructed around the tanks and filling and dispensing areas for spill-control purposes.

The environmental assessment for the complex requires that all piping involved with fuel transfer be constructed above ground, ensuring visible leak detection

should any occur, he said.

A 1,250 square-foot facility will be constructed to house operations personnel at the POL complex. The housing facility will be air-conditioned and will have a latrine, an emergency shower and a water fountain.

This facility will also have a small maintenance and storage area for use by personnel in day-to-day operations, said Sergeant Free. Reservists here are looking forward to moving into the new facility, said Tech. Sgt. Charles Larouche, 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels technician.

"Right now we have a very small building – much too small for the nine people who work there on a unit training weekend," said Sergeant Larouche.

"The improvements that will come with the new facility should be a morale booster for everyone who works there."

FSC volunteer coordinator brings experience to base

By Senior Airman Heidi Davis
Public Affairs

As of Oct. 18, the family support center has a new volunteer coordinator to format the needs of the base into requests for volunteers.

Terri Harshman, a Smith Grove Ky., native, has been involved in volunteer work for the past 20 years while her husband has been in the Army.

"I've done volunteer work from Kentucky and Texas to Arizona and Germany," she said. "I've also had the privilege of volunteering at the White House for two years in the Children's Correspondence Department, answering letters written by children to the president, first lady and the first pets."

Because Mrs. Harshman has always enjoyed giving her time and service, she came to Hurlburt Field to fill the need for a volunteer coordinator.

"In a nutshell, I'm going to be paid to do the things I enjoy doing for free. It's true: 'what goes around, comes around.'"

As part of her job, Mrs. Harshman will address the needs of the community and search for volunteers willing to help. Although she's only been here a short time, she's already planning events for the

future. On Saturday and Sunday, volunteers will gather at the Panhandle Animal Welfare Society to help clean up the mess Hurricane Ivan left behind.

Mrs. Harshman is also looking for Airmen to sort food and gifts to be distributed to families in need during the holiday season from Dec. 17-19 at Oriole Beach School.

In the future, Mrs. Harshman hopes to connect each volunteer with a particular agency that's in need of their specific talents and abilities. "Volunteering is a circle," she said. "The circle represents the needs of our community. My job is to format needs into a request for the particular work to be done. The circle includes a request for a specific skill, time commitment, attitudes, etc."

In order to get the word out for volunteer opportunities, Mrs. Harshman relies heavily on first sergeants. "They've been a tremendous help in getting out the information," she said. "I made the needs known, and the volunteers have responded."



Terri Harshman

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Carter, the Birdstrike Program's executive director. The dogs are workaholics and won't stop until you make them, he said.

All of the dogs are trained at Dover Air Force Base, Del., and the Gainesville Regional Airport, Fla. This helps the dogs become accustomed to the noisy engines, runways and other things associated with an airport setting, said Dr. Carter. The dogs are also spayed or neutered, microchipped, current on all of their vaccinations, free from fleas and ticks and in peak physical health and condition, he said.

"The inclusion of Rebecca and Rhett are a valuable addition to the 16th SOW safety team," said Major Mangold. "It marks a change in philosophy on how we handle wildlife management around our airfield."

WINGMAN, Continued from Page 1

cide and preventative measures and a 'wingman' plan of action for their troops.

The group also heard a message from Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley, Air Force Special Operations Command commander, who emphasized the need for "direct and honest dialogue between Airmen and their supervisors" as well as the importance of "seeking ideas from the most junior Airmen, who are on the front lines, day in and day out and face the greatest stressors."

After concluding the meeting at the JSOU, each commander returned to his squadron to lead their troops in Wingman Day activities.

Although each squadron conducted their own set of activities, basic messages were sent out all over base. Amongst the topics discussed was the Air Force wide suicide rate; airman first class suicides rose by more than five times in fiscal year 2004 than in fiscal year 2003. In fact, the

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more than 100 students in various stages of training, permitting the 23rd SIS to more fully focus on its primary mission.

This transformation was the culmi-

highest number of suicides was between July 1 and Sept. 30, according to the base behavioral health clinic. The main contributing factor to those deaths reported were high levels of stress.

"Airmen were encouraged to be aware of stress indicators, so they could provide help for their wingmen in the future," said Lt. Col. Timothy Watts, 16th SOW director of staff.

After giving a list of general causes of stress, the troops were asked what they perceived as "the chief contributors to unit stressors impacting subordinates and co-workers." The most widely named stressors were: thirty-eight months of constant deployments, low manning within squadrons, Global War on Terrorism operations all over the world and an overall higher operations tempo, Colonel Watts said.

Before concluding the group sessions, each troop was given a list of available services on base to assist with stress-related problems. Each squadron wrapped up the day with a time of fellowship to focus on their unit's success.

Kenneth Rodriguez, 720th SIG commander, during the activation ceremony. "It's the result of the combined efforts and teamwork of the 720th staff, the 23rd SIS, the Air Force Special Operations Command staff and the 16th Special Operations Wing."

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**Veteran's Affairs
expands benefits
for ex-POWs**

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced the expansion of benefits to all former prisoners of war with strokes and common heart diseases.

"This is an issue that has been studied and debated too long," VA Secretary Anthony Principi said. "We have scientific studies supporting the association of these illnesses to the military service of our former POWs."

The secretary, who oversees the operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs, announced the new benefits in a speech Saturday night at a national convention of the American Ex-POWs.

The decision benefits former POWs with strokes and most heart diseases. Those veterans will be automatically eligible for disability compensation for those common ailments, and their spouses and dependents will be eligible for service-connected survivors' benefits if these diseases contribute to the death of a former POW.

In September 2003, Mr. Principi launched a nationwide outreach effort to identify and provide benefits to the estimated 11,000 former POWs who weren't receiving VA disability compensation or other services. There are about 35,000 living ex-POWs.

The secretary has also urged Congress to change federal law that required that former POWs must be detained for at least 30 days to qualify for the full range of POW benefits.

The administration's new decision will add to the list of 16 medical problems that VA presumes to be linked to the military service of former POWs.

Holiday season can be difficult, stressful

By Crystal Lavadour
92nd ARW Public Affairs

FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE, Wash. – The holiday season is supposed to be a time of fun, family and good food.

Unfortunately, with all of the pleasure the season can bring, it can also be a very difficult time for some.

Several things can make it more stressful: extra financial needs, family disagreements, deployments and dealing with the loss of a loved one. The easiest way to avoid financial stress is to make a detailed holiday budget and stick to it, said Captain Kimberly Newsom, chief of life skills support center at the 92nd Medical Group. It's easy to overspend using credit cards.

"It isn't until you get the bill in the mail that you realize just how much you spent," she said.

She suggests shoppers leave the credit and debit cards at home and only take the amount of cash they have budgeted to keep from overspending.

Another option is to make gifts. "Come to the health and wellness center for some

great healthy recipes; make some treats and put them in a pretty tin," Captain Newsom said. Homemade gifts can cost a lot less and be a great activity for families to do together. Sometimes too much family togetherness can become a source of stress as well. Family disagreements can happen at big gatherings. If a fight starts, the best thing to do is to shift the attention away from the argument and on to something more pleasant.

Negativity can be contagious. Don't let an unhappy person suck everyone into his or her crankiness. But, what if it's family separation, such as a deployment, that causes the extra stress?

"It's the support system that carries people through deployments," Captain Newsom said.

Family members of deployed service members have several avenues to find support. Seek others who are in the same situation, maybe through the family support center or a unit's key spouse.

"You can include deployed members in your celebrations, even though they aren't with you," she said.

Captain Newsom suggested getting the family together to write letters and gather items to send in

a care package. Sometimes the holidays serve as a reminder of loved ones who have passed away, which can dampen the joy of the season. Captain Newsom suggests talking to others who knew the deceased person.

"Share memories, and don't try to cover up the fact that you're missing them," she said. "Suppressing feelings only makes it worse. Do something special in remembrance such as holding a small service, observing a moment of silence or placing a wreath at a place of worship."

No matter where the stress stems from, people shouldn't let the craziness of the season get in the way of their own good health, she said. Staying active is very important and can be especially difficult during the holiday season with all of the extra activities and the colder weather. Home exercise DVDs and videos are great option for people looking to get in some indoor exercise.

"Continue taking care of yourself," she said. "Don't let that go by the wayside." **(AFPN)**



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VA IDs battle identity theft

WASHINGTON— Department of Veterans Affairs officials have designed a new identity card for veterans that will safeguard confidential information while combating identity theft.

"The new identification card ensures veterans' personal information is protected," Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi said.

"It also helps prevent the theft of important benefits and services from veterans they earned by their service to our country."

The card, formally known as the Veterans Identity Card, will have the veteran's photo on the front and identify him or her as an enrollee in the VA's health-care system.

Encrypted on a magnetic tape on the back of the card will be the veteran's social security number, birth date and a control number. The magnetic strip also records whether the veteran has a service-connected disability.

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation. The Federal Trade Commission listed identity theft as the number one fraud reported by consumers in 2003. Requests from veterans and their congressional representatives were instrumental in bringing about these latest changes.

"The new (card) ensures the security of veterans' personal information as well as ensuring only eligible veterans receive the benefits and services they've earned," said Kristin Cunningham of the VA health-care system's business office.

Veterans can request the new card at their local medical center. Processing will take five to seven days once eligibility is verified. Existing cards will remain valid until veterans receive their new cards. **(AFPN)**



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Carrie Hinson

Family members watch the K-9 demonstration hosted by the 16th Security Forces Squadron dog handlers. The event was part of the family support center's Moms, Pops, and Tots Program.



A 16th SFS Airman extends a kimono jacket for a child to try on. The jacket is worn by military working dog trainers to simulate a suspect attack. Staff Sgt. Ron King, (red jacket below), initiates a chase by a narcotics-trained dog.



K-9 trainers brief event goes about the military working dogs' capabilities.

Military working dog shows off tricks, talents to moms, pops and tots

By Vanessa Adame
Public Affairs

Dozens of local toddlers and parents got a lesson on the role of the military working dog at a K-9 demonstration here last week.

Members of the Moms, Pops and Tots class were treated to more than a textbook lesson of the 16th Security Forces Squadron's military working dog program.

The group listened as trainers discussed the dogs' capabilities in detecting narcotics and the training they undergo. Spectators also watched Sara the 5-year-old canine enthusiastically jump over fences, go through tunnels and run up stairs in her quest to chase down a suspect - and then stop on command.

"It was very informational and educational," said Debbie Lunblad, FSC community readiness consultant. "The trainers really gained respect from the adults for the work and protection they afford the military community."

The children were so awed by the obstacle course that they had Sara repeat the obstacle course, which she quickly obliged

to. The little ones also had the opportunity to get up close to the trainers and kimono jacket, an attack suit that trainers wear as protection when demonstrating a suspect attack.

"It was great," said Lona Moore, spouse of Senior Master Sgt. Joe Moore of the 16th Mission Support Squadron who attended the event with her sons ages 1 and 4. "It was really neat to see, the kids really enjoyed it. Now every time we come through the base gates my son looks for Sara."

Moms, Pops and Tots, is an informal support and activity group for stay-at-home mothers and fathers and their children from infancy to toddlers. The Moms, Pops and Tots class for ages 2 and up meets from 10 to 11 a.m. every Wednesday. The class for children up to age 2, meets at the FSC from 10 to 11 a.m. every Tuesday. The purpose of the class is to bring together parents and their children to familiarize them with the base and local community, and serve as a support and social group. For more information about the class, call Mrs. Lunblad at 884-6800/5441.



Proper wear of Global War on Terrorism service medal

In March 2003, President George Bush approved the Global War on Terrorism service medal for award to Air Force active-duty, Reserve and Guard personnel as recognition for their service in the GWOT.

Members must meet the following to be eligible to wear the GWOT-S

The chief of staff of the Air Force authorizes the wearing of the GWOT-S for those individuals who either directly or indirectly supported the designated operations. Individuals must have participated in or served in support of the GWOT specified operations on or after Sept. 11, 2001, and to a future date to be determined.

Initial approved operations are airport security operations Sept. 27, 2001, through May 31, 2002, Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom

Service members must be assigned, attached or mobilized to a unit participating in or serving in support of designated operations for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days. There's no time limit required for nonconsecutive days to be accumulated or meet one of the following criteria:

Engaged in actual combat against the enemy, and under circumstances involving grave danger of death or serious bodily injury from enemy action

While participating in the specified operation - regardless of time - is killed, wounded or injured requiring medical evacuation

Personnel supporting the GWOT in a non-deployed status, whether stationed at home or overseas, are eligible for the GWOT-S

Examples of this support include: Maintaining/loading weapons sys-

tens for combat missions, securing installations against terrorism, augmenting command posts or crisis action teams and processing personnel for deployment in support of the GWOT.


If members supported GWOT based on criteria in paragraph 2, they must validate entitlement by providing documentation (temporary-duty order/travel voucher, enlisted performance report/officer performance report, decoration citation, letter of appreciation, certificate of appreciation) showing the number of days in support of OAS/OEF/OIF/ONE.

In the absence of documentation, to verify entitlement to the GWOT-S, members on non-deployed status must justify their entitlement to their unit commander. The unit commander provides a memorandum attesting to the member's entitlement, operation(s) supported and

cumulative number of days.

The GWOT-S shall be worn immediately after the GWOT expeditionary medal; both shall directly follow the Kosovo campaign medal. At this time, only one award of the GWOT-S is authorized for any individual, regardless of how many different tours, TDYs, or deployments served in support of OSA/OEF/OIF/ONE operations. There is no service star or other device authorized at this time on this medal.

The initial GWOT-S will be issued to Air Force active-duty, Reserve and Guard personnel by their military personnel flights upon availability. However, if desired, members may purchase the medal at their own expense through Army Air Force Exchange Service. The GWOT-S national stock number is 8455-01-506-7170.



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Community

Power outage

There will be a base-wide power outage Saturday beginning at 7 a.m. Critical units should have back-up power; most circuits should be back up by noon. For more information, call the 16th Civil Engineer Squadron at 884-6683.

Vehicle decals

Personnel are reminded and encouraged to beat the rush and update their 2004 vehicle registration decals, as they will expire Jan. 1, 2005. Pass and registration office hours are as follows: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The pass and registration office is located in Building 90210. Decals can also be updated by visiting the visitor control center from 6 a.m. to midnight Monday through Friday. To complete the process motorists will need to present a vehicle registration, driver's license and proof of insurance. For more information, call 884-5233.

Tree Lighting Ceremony

Hurlburt Field's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held at the Air Park Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. Winners of the Greeting Card Contest and Holiday Ornament Contest will be announced at the ceremony, and prizes will be awarded. Children are also invited to share a snack with Santa Claus at the base chapel and have their picture taken for \$3 after the event. For more information, call 884-6942.

Tech Show

The 16th Communication Squadron is hosting the annual Tech Show from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday at the Soundside club. The free event will feature the latest in technology. For more information, call (888) 282-2262 or visit www.atcexpo.com/shows.

Post office hours

Until further notice, the U.S. Postal Service located in the mini-mall will operate from 8:45 to 10:45 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m.

Alternative child care

The Mildly Ill Family Child Care Program provides care to children of military or Department of Defense civilians with a mild illness or a condition that prevents them from using their regular child care arrangements. Care is provided in a licensed/contracted family child care provider's home. The program is free to Hurlburt Field and Eglin Air Force base families. For more information, call 581-1207.

Focus 56

The Hurlburt Focus 56 council is requesting motivated, innovative staff and technical sergeants attend the next meeting Dec. 14 at J.R. Rockers at 3 p.m. Currently, the group's goals are to educate and guide the number one enlisted force through the 21st century by providing a continual flow of information among junior/senior enlisted and senior leadership assigned to Hurlburt Field. The newly elected council members will be introduced. For more information, call 884-3899.

MOAA scholarships

Military Officers Association of America is accepting applications for its 2005 Base/Post Scholarship

Hurlburt Happenings

program, which will award 50 scholarship grants of \$1,000 to dependent children of military personnel. For more information or to download an application, visit www.moaa.org.

Christmas party

The family support center's Moms, Pops and Tots program will host its Christmas Around the World party Monday from 5 to 7 p.m. in Room 109. Hear, taste and see how 10 countries from around the world celebrate Christmas. The program is open to parents and children ages 2 and under. To make reservations, call 884-6000 or 314-0370.

Candlelight vigil

The Air Force Enlisted Village's annual candlelight vigil will be held Monday at the Christmas Box Angel statue, located in the Garden of Hope on the Bob Hope Village campus, at 6 p.m. A reception will be held in the Bob Gates Welcome Center immediately following. For more information, call Cathy Landroche at 651-3766.

Volunteer opportunities

Dental volunteers needed

The Eglin Dental Service is accepting applications for the Red Cross Volunteer Dental Assistant Training Program. The program is six months long; the next class start date is Jan. 10, 2005. For more information, call 883-8324/8325.

Holiday gift wrap

The base exchange is sponsoring the Community Gift Wrap Program until Dec. 24. Base organizations interested in participating must submit letters of interest to the BX or e-mail them to brooksl@aafes.com. Letters must include the organization, a point of contact, work and home phone numbers and an e-mail address. The store will provide resources to wrap gifts; organizations must provide volunteers and a container for donations. The dates will be assigned by lottery system and the first 29 organizations will be notified of dates selected. For more information, call 581-0030.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is looking for individuals to volunteer during the holidays. Those interested should call to schedule dates. For more information, call Maria Holloway at 243-4531.

Angel Tree program

The Angel Tree program is going on now through Dec. 10 in the base exchange lobby. The program provides gifts to children of disadvantaged families within the Hurlburt Field community. A Christmas tree is set up in the BX lobby with gift tags for patrons to take, and purchase an age appropriate gift to return to the container beside the tree. For more information, call Capt. Mari Garcia at 884-7548 or 2nd Lt. Carrie Patch at 884-8698.

Classes

ERAU spring registration

The Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University spring registration will run Dec. 13 - Jan. 7 in Building 90220 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. For more information, call 581-2106.

Air Force TV and Radio News



To check out Air Force TV or Radio News visit: <http://af.feedroom.com> or www.af.mil/news and click on TV or radio to find out what's happening around the Air Force.

Hurlburt Field Chapel



Catholic Mass
Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 7:15 and 10 a.m.
Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 to 5 p.m., or by request
Youth: 5 p.m. Sunday
Religious Education: September - May

Protestant Services
Sunday, 8:30 a.m. (Traditional worship)
11:30 a.m. (Contemporary worship)
Religious Education: August - May
Youth and Singles groups available
Jewish Services (882-2111)
Sabbath services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Eglin Chapel Center
Muslim Services (882-2111), Eglin Chapel Center
Jum'ah: Friday, 12:45 p.m.
For more information, call 884-7795

At the movies



Prices are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children. Movies start at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Hurlburt Field 884-7648

Friday and Sunday - (R) Team America: World Police - Team America follows an international police force dedicated to maintaining global stability. Learning that power hungry dictator Kim Jong Il is out to destroy the world, the team recruits a Broadway star to go undercover. With the help of the team, he slips into an arms dealer's hideout to uncover the plan to destroy the world. All the while they're developing close relationships that lead to love, jealousy, and betrayal.

Saturday - (PG-13) Surviving Christmas, starring Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini - Facing another Christmas alone, Drew decides to go back to his childhood home to spend the holidays with family. There is, however, one problem: the people living there now aren't his family. Nevertheless, Drew has his mind set on an old-fashioned Christmas, and the fact that the "family" in question are complete strangers, isn't about to put a crimp in his plans.

Eglin 882-1066

Friday and Sunday - (PG-13) The Grudge, starring Sarah Michelle Gellar and William Mapother - Karen, an American student working with a Japanese health center for college credit, comes across a mysterious curse. She finds herself embroiled in a fight for her own sanity, and ultimately, her survival. Known as a "grudge," the curse was born inside of a house after its inhabitants died while consumed by rage.

Saturday - (R) I Heart Huckabees, starring Jason Schwartzman and Isabelle Huppert - A plucky couple, the Jaffes, like to play detective. Their latest case: a miserable retail worker named Albert Markovski and his archenemy, Brad. Albert has faced a series of odd coincidences in his life, and he's hoping his new detective pals can help him figure out the meaning of being born. When Brad, an executive at the retail superstore Huckabee's, learns of the detectives, he's determined to hire the pair. **Note:** (Editor's note: Movies are subject to change. Telephone numbers are provided for patrons to confirm dates.)

Sub-Saharan African course

The Joint Special Operations University will host a Sub-Saharan African Orientation Course Monday through Dec. 10 for all Special Operations personnel preparing to live in or deploy to the African continent. The course will provide non-technical information on the cultural, historical, political, economical, social, religious and security dynamics of Africa. For more information, call Joyce Weber at 884-4731 or Dann Mattiza at 884-5749.

DANTES certification

The DANTES Certification Program announces a pilot-testing program that provides free Microsoft certification tests to eligible service members. Vouchers will provide service members with access to the free Microsoft Certification test. Vouchers will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. Service members in information technology-related occupations and those who’ve gained IT-related experience through training or education are eligible to apply by Nov. 1, 2006. For more information, visit <https://www.dantes-microsoft-test.com>.

Part-Day Enrichment Program

The child development center has openings in the Part-Day Enrichment Program for children ages 3-5. The three-day class is held Monday, Wednesday and Friday; the two-day class is held Tuesday and Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The monthly fee is based on total family income. For more information, call the CDC at 884-6664.

Parenting workshop

The child development center is hosting a free parenting workshop Monday. Dr. Becky Bailey, will present “Loving Guidance: Setting Limits Without Guilt” at the base theater from 1 to 3 p.m. The workshop will teach parents to achieve peaceful and harmonious relationships with their children. Topics include building your child’s character through conflicts, and helping parents be fair and firm. For more information, call Lisa LaConte at 884-6664.

Know laws before buying scooters

With the holiday season approaching, many children will have the motorized scooter on their wish list.

But, parents should be aware of legal and moral obligations associated with the purchase of the scooter.

As of now, Hurlburt Field doesn’t have specific rules or regulations for the motorized scooter. Therefore, the 16th Security Forces Squadron asks all Hurlburt Field personnel and residents to follow Florida rules and regulations.

Many of the smaller scooters most popular with children and teens resemble a skateboard with handles to which a small gasoline engine has been added. Regardless of the type of scooter being used, according to Florida law (322.01(26), F.S), all motorized scooters are considered motor vehicles.

In addition, because scooters don’t have license plates or registrations, the law doesn’t allow them on any public roads – even if the operator has a driver’s license as required for all motor vehicle operators

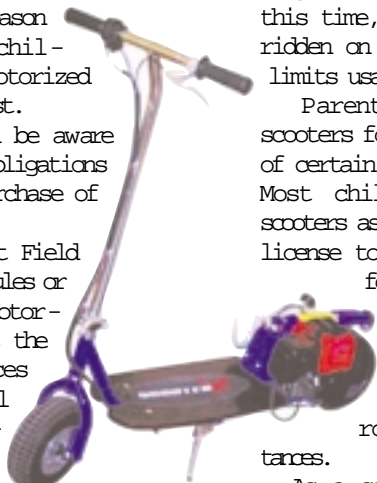
under Florida law (322.03, F.S).

Many parents and children aren’t aware it’s illegal to ride scooters on sidewalks, bike paths or roadways, and if they’re caught doing so, can be subject to fines. At this time, motorized scooters can only be ridden on private property. This severely limits usage for most people.

Parents who purchase motorized scooters for their children should be aware of certain potential safety hazards as well. Most children who receive motorized scooters as gifts are too young to obtain a license to operate a motor vehicle, therefore are unfamiliar with traffic laws and may be oblivious to traffic hazards and problems that drivers of larger vehicles face, such as blind spots, slick roads and long stopping distances.

As a safety precaution and because it violates current state law, motorized scooters have no place on the roadways of our base or state. Parents who choose to purchase motorized scooters for their children should educate them on vehicle safety and ensure they comply with Florida state laws.

For more information about motorized scooters and other safety topics, visit the Florida Highway Patrol’s Web site at <http://www.fhp.state.fl.us/> or the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles’ Web site at <http://www.hsmv.state.fl.us>.



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Undefeated EMS snags football championship from AMXS, 21-20

By Senior Airman Saul Bookman
16th EMS

With the men's intramural football season coming to a close, the top two teams went head to head in the championship game Nov. 22.

The 16th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, who went 15-0 this season, proved its superiority as it surpassed the 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 21-20.

In the first two minutes of the game, it looked hopeful for AMXS, as they took the ball for a quick score. However, with EMS on offense, AMXS received a 10-yard penalty for roughing an EMS passer. Regardless, AMXS intercepted the ball at the goal line and ran down field widening the gap, 14-0.

In an effort to come back, EMS went on an eight-play 75-yard drive capped off by an 18-yard pass in the end zone to Randy McKenzie. This cut the lead to 14-7 in the last two minutes of the first half.

In the second half, EMS drove all the way to the AMXS two-yard line. After two unsuccessful downs EMS faced fourth down; the pass was incomplete, but a pass interference call on the AMXS gave EMS a fresh set of downs at the AMXS one-yard line. Bud Cooper was found in the back of the end zone for what would prove to be the back breaker.

"We felt if we could tie the game up after getting down early, we would be in control," said Cooper.

After AMXS went three and out on the next drive, EMS went on another drive highlighted by Robert Keegen's 23-yard, third-down reception to put EMS into prime scoring position, and scrambled for the go-ahead score from ten yards out.

With the score 21-14, AMXS wouldn't go down without a fight. They scored on the next possession. The extra point attempt was no good, maintaining a 21-20 edge for EMS.

AMXS had one more chance after an EMS three and out, but couldn't get the extra points. EMS, who is on a 21-game winning streak, outscored AMXS, 21-20.

"We said we would win it again this year, and we dominated. No one was going to beat us," said Keegan.

"We lead the league in points scored and least points given up. We dominated in every phase of the game. That's why we're the champs!" said Jeff White, EMS.

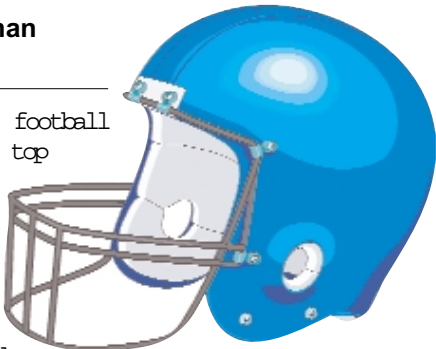


Photo by Airman 1st Class Brett Logan

'Trotting' along

Turkey Trot participants sprint to the finish line in front of the Aderholt Fitness Center Nov. 24. Approximately 75 people participated in the run.

Over 30 Commando B-ball

Team	Won	Lost	Tie
SVS	7	1	0
MXG	4	2	1
AFSOC	4	2	0
MDG	4	2	0
LRS	2	2	1
RHS	1	1	1
SFS	2	4	0
CCW	1	6	0
CES	0	6	1

Lewis Burnett, 16th Services Squadron (white jersey), takes a shot during the over 30 basketball game held in the Aderholt Fitness Center Nov. 22



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Carrie Hinson

Sports shorts

Racquetball tournament

The Hurlburt Field Fitness Centers, in conjunction with the Emerald Coast Racquetball Club, will host the Emerald Coast Racquetball Fall Classic Dec. 11. Matches will be held at both the Aderholt and Commando Fitness Centers. Start time is 8 a.m. Participants must register by Wednesday. The round-robin format tournament is set with each player set for four matches with a single elimination playoff to follow. Both age and skill divisions are available. Entry fees are \$20 for the first event (singles) and \$15 for second event (doubles only). The first five novices who sign up will have their entry fee reimbursed upon check-in. For more information e-mail Ross Smith at

RCS111@aol.com or Bob Talley at btal@cox.net, or John Proctor at 884-6884.

Ten-mile Challenge

The 12th annual 10-mile Challenge is scheduled Dec. 11 at the Aderholt Fitness Center. Participants should register at any fitness center by noon Thursday. Check-in is at 6:30 a.m. with the race starting at 7 a.m. Runners of all ages are invited to attend. Trophies for each category will be awarded. For more information, call 884-6884/4412 or 881-5121.

Basketball

Intramural basketball is set to begin in

December. For more information about these programs, call Tech. Sgt. Bernice Stoffel at the Aderholt Fitness Center at 884-6884 or call the health and wellness center at 884-4412.

Aerobathon

The ninth annual Aerobathon is planned for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Aderholt Fitness Center. The event will feature step aerobics, kick-boxing, and high and low-impact aerobics. Refreshments will be provided and door prizes will be awarded. The event is open to all military personnel and their families ages 16 and up. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Melanie Deumeland at 884-6884.